Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-9.   (canceled)

10.   (new) A method for access authorization for a software module in a computer-controlled switching device within a communications network, comprising:

providing a license database in the switching device, the license database including the software module and license information pertaining to the software module;

initiating an interaction between a license database and a portable computer readable data medium included in the switching device via an activation of the software module in the license database;

transmitting a hardware identification information and the license information over a communication link from the switching device to a license manager;

creating a license confirmation information by the license manager via a license reference database having licenses for software modules purchased by an operator of the switching device; and

sending a license confirmation information to the switching device to decide on the authorization of the software module,

wherein the license manage is remotely located from the switching device.

11.   (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein an asymmetrical encryption is used in the interaction between the license database and the portable medium.

12.   (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein a cryptographic algorithm is used in the interaction between the license database and the portable medium.

13.   (new) The method according to claim 12, wherein the portable medium is a card selected from the group consisting of smart card, chip card and SD/MultiMedia card.

14. (new) The method according to claim 13, wherein the hardware identification information is created from a identification number of the license database and a information stored on the card.

15. (new) The method according to claim 13, wherein the hardware identification information and the license information transmitted from the switching to the license manger are encrypted.

16. (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the license manager is a server and is networked with the switching device via a communication network.

17. (new) The method according to claim 16, wherein the created license confirmation information authorizes operation of the software module in the switching device when the license information for the software module is included in the purchased licenses.

18. (new) The method according to claim 16,
wherein the created license confirmation information authorizes a test operation of the software module in the switching device when the license information for the software module is not included in the purchased licenses, and
wherein the test operation is for a period of time.

19. (new) The method according to claim 16, wherein the communication connection between the switching device and the license manager is routed via a circuit-switched or a packet switch communication network.

20. (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the portable medium is a card selected from the group consisting of smart card, chip card and SD/MultiMedia card.

21. (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the hardware identification information and the license information transmitted from the switching to the license manger are encrypted.

22.   (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the license manager is a server and is networked with the switching device via a communication network.

23.   (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the created license confirmation information authorizes an operation of the software module in the switching device when the license information for the software module is included in the purchased licenses.

24.   (new) The method according to claim 10,

wherein the created license confirmation information authorizes a test operation of the software module in the switching device when the license information for the software module is not included in the purchased licenses, and

wherein the test operation is for a period of time.

25.   (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the communication connection between the switching device and the license manager is routed via a circuit-switched or a packet switch communication network.